DPI/652

DISARMAMENT FACT SHEETS

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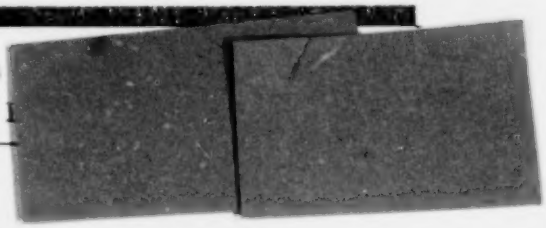

Fact Sheet No. 11 DPI/652

GENERAL ASSEMBLY RESOLUTIONS ON DISARMAMENT -- 1979 SESSION

At its thirty-fourth (1979) session, the General Assembly adopted a total of 39 resolutions on disarmament-related matters, seeking to encourage progress in negotiations and to promote implementation of the measures called for in the Final Document of the 1978 special session on disarmament. The Assembly decided to proclaim the 1980s as the Second Disarmament Decade; adopted a Declaration on International Co-operation for Disarmament; initiated studies on several disarmament issues, and heard China's announcement that it would take its seat as a member of the Committee on Disarmament at the 1980 session.

Following is a summary of the resolutions.

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Disarmament Decade: Expressing disappointment that the purposes of the Disarmament Decade of the 1970s had not been realized, the Assembly decided to declare the 1980s as "the Second Disarmament Decade". It directed the Disarmament Commission to prepare elements of a draft resolution on the Decade for adoption at the 35th (1980) session. The resolution is to include "an indication of targets during the Disarmament Decade for accomplishing the major objective and goals of disarmament, as well as ways and means of mobilizing world public opinion in this regard".

/Resolution 34/75, adopted without a vote./

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Disarmament Week: Emphasizing the importance of "wide and continued mobilization of world public opinion in support of halting and reversing the arms race, especially the nuclear arms race in all its aspects", the Assembly noted with satisfaction the reports of the Secretary-General on measures taken

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by governmental and non-governmental organizations to foster disarmament (A/34/457 and Add.1 and 2) and elements of a model programme for disarmament week, to be observed annually during the week starting 24 October (A/34/436).

/Resolution 34/83 I, adopted without a vote./

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Declaration on International Co-operation for Disarmament: The Declaration, proposed by Czechoslovakia, includes a call upon all States to conduct disarmament negotiations with a view to"early achievement of a decisive breakthrough in the sphere of disarmament". It asks States to exert efforts to strengthen international peace and security, build confidence among States, and set in motion the security system provided for in the UN Charter; to refrain from seeking military superiority and repudiate all concepts based on military intimidation and "policies of acting from a position of strength"; to use the educational system, mass media and all other appropriate institutions to ensure that world opinion exerts a positive influence on Government efforts to resolve disarmament issues; and "to prevent and prohibit propaganda for war and the arms race and the dissemination of views asserting their necessity or usefulness on political, economic or other grounds".

/Resolution 34/88, adopted by 116 to none, with 27 abstentions./

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Nuclear Disarmament: Reaffirming that "all nuclear-weapon States, in particular, those with the most important arsenals, bear a special responsibility" for achieving nuclear disarmament, the Assembly stressed that priority in disarmament negotiations should be given to nuclear weapons. It requested the Committee on Disarmament "as a matter of high priority" to initiate negotiations with the participation of all nuclear-weapon States on the cessation of the nuclear arms race and nuclear disarmament.

/Resolution 34/83 J, adopted by 120 to 2 (France, USA), with 19 abstentions./

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SALT : The Assembly while noting that it had not been possible for the SALT II Treaty "to go beyond certain limitations which, taken together, permit considerable increments both quantitatively and qualitatively, in relation to the levels of "existing nuclear arsenals, nevertheless welcomed the US/USSR agreement to the effect, inter alia, of "continuing to pursue negotiations, in accordance with the principle of equality and equal security, on measures for the further limitation and reduction", quantitatively and qualitatively, of strategic arms. Furthermore, the Assembly stated, the Treaty constitutes "a vital element for the continuation and progress of the negotiations between the two States possessing the most important arsenals of nuclear weapons". The Assembly expressed its trust that the Treaty will enter into force at an early date, and that the SALT III negotiations will begin promptly thereafter.

The Assembly welcomed the US Soviet statement of 18 June 1979 that they would seek "significant and substantial reductions in the numbers of strategic offensive arms" and "qualitative limitations on strategic offensive arms, including restrictions on the development, testing and deployment of new types of strategic offensive arms and on the modernization of existing strategic offensive arms".

The SALT question, dealt with up to now under the item concerning general and complete disarmament, will be considered at the next session under the separate agenda item, "Strategic arms limitation talks".

/Resolution 34/87 F, adopted without a vote: the paragraph referring to increases of nuclear arsenals permitted by SALT II was approved by 128 to none, with 12 abstentions./

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Nuclear Weapon Test Ban: The Assembly reiterated its "grave concern" that nuclear weapon testing continues unabated, against the wishes of the overwhelming majority of Member States. It said a treaty to prohibit "all nuclear test explosions by all States for all Time" is vital for the prevention of both vertical and horizontal proliferation of nuclear weapons.

The Committee on Disarmament was requested to "initiate negotiations on such a treaty, as a matter of the highest priority". The Assembly called on the three nuclear-weapon States which have been negotiating on a test ban since 1977 (United Kingdom, United States and USSR) to seek a positive conclusion of their negotiations in time for consideration at the next CD session, which begins on 5 February 1980.

Governments are invited to contribute to development of national and international co-operative measures to detect seismic events, aimed at setting up a global verification of a comprehensive test ban treaty.

/Resolution 34/73, adopted by 137 to none, with 2 abstentions. All five nuclear-weapon States were among 13 countries which abstained in a separate vote on the paragraph requesting the CD to initiate negotiations on such a treaty. China and France abstained on the resolution as a whole./

In a separate decision, the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to prepare a study on the question of a comprehensive nuclear test ban, as recommended by the Advisory Board on Disarmament Studies and by the Secretary-General himself. The study is to be completed in time to be transmitted to the CD in the spring of 1980.

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Non-Stationing of Nuclear Weapons: The Assembly considered the non-stationing of nuclear weapons on the territories of States where there are no such weapons at present "would constitute a step towards the larger objective of the subsequent complete withdrawal of nuclear weapons from the territories of other States, thus contributing to the prevention of the spread of nuclear weapons, leading eventually to the total elimination of nuclear weapons".

The Assembly "believes it is necessary to examine possibilities for an international agreement" on the subject. Views of States on this question will be presented in a report to the 35th (1980) session.

/Resolution 34/87 C, adopted by 99 to 18, with 19 abstentions. Of the nuclear-weapon States, only the USSR voted in favour./

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Ban on Fissionable Material for Weapons: The Committee on Disarmament was requested to pursue its consideration of "an adequately verified cessation and prohibition of the production of fissionable material for nuclear weapons and other nuclear explosive devices". The General Assembly said the cessation of production of fissionable material for weapons and progressive conversion of stocks to peaceful uses would be a significant step towards halting and reversing the nuclear arms race.

/Resolution 34/84 D, adopted by 118 to 9, with 12 abstentions. The United States and United Kingdom voted in favour, while France abstained and the USSR voted against. China did not participate in the vote./

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Security Assurances: Under agenda items on strengthening the guarantees of security of non-nuclear-weapon States, and strengthening their security against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons, the Assembly adopted three resolutions. All three recognized that "effective measures to assure non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons can constitute a positive contribution to the prevention of the spread of nuclear weapons". The resolutions differ in their approach to the idea of an international convention to provide such assurances.

Resolution 34/84, sponsored by socialist and other countries, requested the Committee on Disarmament to continue negotiations on the matter in 1980 on a priority basis "with a view to their early conclusion with the elaboration of a convention". Resolution 34/85, sponsored by Pakistan and Mali, recommended that the CD should "conclude effective international arrangements to assure non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons during its 1980 session, taking into account the widespread support for the conclusion of an international convention and giving consideration to any other proposals designed to secure the same objective". Resolution 34/86, proposed by the United States, requested the CD "to continue its efforts at its next session with a view to reaching agreement" on strengthening the security of non-nuclear-weapon States. It noted the statements that the nuclear-weapon States have made on assurances to non-nuclear-weapon States, but did not refer to the idea of a convention.

/Resolution 34/84, adopted by 114 to 1 (Albania), with 25 abstentions.
Resolution 34/85, adopted by 120 to none, with 22 abstentions.
Resolution 34/86, adopted by 110 to 1 (Albania), with 29 abstentions./

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Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone of Latin America: The Assembly welcomed the fact that the five nuclear-weapon States have now ratified Additional Protocol II of the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America (Treaty of Tlatelolco). The Protocol is the first disarmament-related agreement in which all of the nuclear-weapon Powers have joined. Under the Protocol, they agreed to fully respect the statute of denuclearization of Latin America in respect of warlike purposes; not to contribute in any way to the performance of acts violating the Treaty; and not to use or threaten to use nuclear weapons against Parties to the Treaty.

/Resolution 34/74, adopted without a vote./

The Assembly also asked the United States and France to ratify Protocol I of the Treaty. Protocol I provides for application of the Treaty in territories of the Latin American zone for which the Parties are internationally responsible. It has been ratified by the Netherlands and the United Kingdom. The United States and France have signed but have not yet ratified the Protocol.

[Resolution 34/71, adopted without a vote]

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Denuclearization of Africa: The Assembly strongly reiterated its call upon all States to respect the continent of Africa and surrounding islands as a nuclear-weapon-free zone - an objective proclaimed by the Organization of African Unity (OAU) in its 1964 Declaration on the Denuclearisation of Africa.

Referring to a United States' report of satellite observation of an apparent nuclear explosion on 22 September 1979 in an area of the Indian Ocean and South Atlantic including the southern part of Africa, the Assembly expressed alarm that South Africa might have detonated a nuclear device, and "vigorously condemned" the reported explosion. It condemned any nuclear collaboration with South Africa and requested the Security Council to take enforcement action to prevent South Africa from further endangering international peace and security through its acquisition of nuclear weapons . At the same time it demanded that South Africa submit all its nuclear installations to inspection by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).

[Resolution 34/76 A, adopted by 128 to none, with 11 abstentions]

In another resolution, the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to follow the situation in regard to the reported nuclear explosion, and to prepare with the assistance of appropriate experts "a comprehensive report on South Africa's plan and capability in the nuclear field". The report is to be submitted at the 35th (1980) Assembly session.

[Resolution 34/76 B, adopted without a vote]

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Israeli Nuclear Armament: Alarmed by "increasing information and evidence regarding Israel's activities aiming at the acquisition and development of nuclear weapons", the Assembly appealed to all States "to put an end to any co-operation with Israel which may assist it in acquiring and developing nuclear weapons and also to dissuade corporations, institutions and individuals" from any such co-operation. It called on Israel to submit all its nuclear facilities to IAEA inspection, strongly condemned any attempt by Israel to introduce nuclear weapons into the Middle East, and requested the Security Council to adopt appropriate measures to ensure implementation of the relevant resolutions concerning Israeli nuclear armament.

The Assembly also requested an expert study "on the Israeli nuclear armament" to be submitted at the 36th (1981) session.

[Resolution 34/89, adopted by 97 to 10, with 38 abstentions]

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Middle East Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone: Recalling past resolutions favouring such a zone, the Assembly urged all parties directly concerned to consider taking steps to implement the proposal. It invited those countries "to declare solemnly that they will refrain on a reciprocal basis from producing, acquiring or in any other way possessing nuclear weapons and nuclear explosive devices"; called upon them to refrain from permitting the stationing of nuclear weapons on their territory by any third party, and to place all their nuclear activities under IAEA safeguards; and invited them to declare their support for such a zone and deposit such declarations with the Security Council.

[Resolution 34/77, adopted by 136 to none, with 1 abstention (Israel)]

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South Asia Nuclear-Free Zone: The Assembly reaffirmed its endorsement, in principle, of the concept of a nuclear-free zone in South Asia, and urged "the States of South Asia and such other neighbouring non-nuclear-weapon States as may be interested to continue to make all possible efforts to establish a nuclear-weapon-free zone in South Asia and to refrain, in the meantime, from any action contrary to this objective".

[Resolution 34/78, adopted by 96 to 2 (Bhutan, India) with 40 abstentions]

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Indian Ocean Zone of Peace: The Assembly decided to convene a Conference on the Indian Ocean during 1981 at Colombo, Sri Lanka, for the implementation of the Declaration of the Indian Ocean as a Zone of Peace (adopted by the Assembly in 1971). An enlarged Ad Hoc Committee on the Indian Ocean will undertake preparatory work for the Conference. The permanent members of the Security Council and major maritime users of the Indian Ocean were invited to serve on the expanded committee.

[Resolution 34/80 B, adopted by 126 to none with 14 abstentions]

The Assembly said that "the continued military presence of the great Powers in the Indian Ocean, conceived in the context of great-Power rivalry, with the danger of a competitive escalation of such a military presence, gives greater urgency to the need to take practical steps for the early implementation of the Declaration of the Indian Ocean as a Zone of Peace". It urged that talks between the USSR and the United States regarding their military presence in the Indian Ocean be resumed without delay, and that they should refrain from any activity prejudicial to implementation of the Declaration.

[Resolution 34/80 A, adopted by 117 to none, with 23 abstentions]

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Strengthening of International Security: In a resolution concerning implementation of the Declaration on the Strengthening of International Security, the Assembly commended the convening of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe, to be held at Madrid in 1980, and expressed "the hope that it will result in further

strengthening the security and co-operation of States in Europe in all spheres, including reduction of armaments and armed forces and halting the arms race in both nuclear and conventional fields". It also commended decisions of the Havana Conference of Non-Aligned Countries on transforming the Mediterranean into a zone of peace and co-operation.

[Resolution 34/100 II adopted by 104 to 2 (Israel and USA) with 24 abstentions]

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Confidence-Building Measures: All States, the Assembly recommended, "should continue to consider arrangements for specific confidence-building measures, taking into account the specific conditions and requirements of each region". The "need and urgency of first steps to diminish the danger of armed conflicts resulting from misunderstandings or from misinterpretation of military activities" was recognized by the Assembly. "The resolution called for a comprehensive study on confidence-building measures by the Secretary-General, with the assistance of a group of qualified governmental experts, to be submitted to the 36th (1981) session of the General Assembly, with a progress report to be submitted to the Assembly's 35th (1980) session."

[Resolution 34/87 B, adopted without a vote. The paragraphs calling for a study were approved separately, with 12 abstentions]

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Chemical Weapons: The Committee on Disarmament was urged "to undertake at the beginning of its 1980 session negotiations on an agreement on the complete and effective prohibition of the development, production and stockpiling of all chemical weapons and on their destruction as a matter of high priority", and was requested to report to the Assembly's 35th (1980) session on the results of its negotiations.

The CD held a number of meetings on this subject in 1979. The United States and Soviet Union, which have been negotiating bilaterally since 1976 on chemical weapons, reported to the CD on a number of points of agreement concerning an eventual treaty. They have not yet submitted a joint proposal, and many CD members have said the Committee should now proceed with its own negotiations.

[Resolution 34/72, adopted without a vote]

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Radiological Weapons: The General Assembly expressed its conviction that a convention to prohibit the development, production, stockpiling and use of radiological weapons, as called for in the Final Document of the special session on disarmament, would "spare mankind from the potential dangers of the use of radioactive materials to cause destruction, damage or injury by means of the radiation produced by the decay of such material". The Assembly requested the CD "to proceed as soon as possible to achieve agreement, through negotiation, on the text of such a convention", and to report to the Assembly's 35th (1980) session. The CD has before it the text of a draft convention submitted jointly by the Soviet Union and the United States.

[Resolution 34/87 A, adopted without a vote]

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New Weapons of Mass Destruction: The CD was asked to continue negotiations "in the light of its existing priorities" with a view to preparing "a draft comprehensive agreement on the prohibition of the development and manufacture of new types of weapons of mass destruction and new systems of such weapons and, where necessary, specific agreements on particular types of such weapons".

[Resolution 34/79, adopted by 117 to none, with 24 abstentions.]

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Excessively Injurious Weapons: The Assembly endorsed plans for a second session of the UN Conference on Prohibitions or Restrictions of Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May Be Deemed to Be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects. The four-week session will begin on 15 September in Geneva. The Assembly noted that at the first session in September 1979, the Conference reached agreement with regard to a draft protocol banning the use of weapons causing injury by fragments not detectable by x-ray, as well as a wide measure of agreement concerning landmines and booby traps. There was also a further convergence of views on prohibition or restriction of use of incendiary weapons.

[Resolution 34/82, adopted without a vote.]

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Institutional Arrangements: The Assembly asked for an expert study on "present institutional requirements and future estimated needs in the UN management of disarmament affairs" and the "possible functions, structure and institutional framework that could meet these requirements and needs". The resolution noted "increasing demands on UN management of disarmament affairs for purposes such as the promotion, substantive preparation, implementation and control of the process of disarmament".

[Resolution 34/87 E, adopted by 121 to 9, with 9 abstentions.]

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World Disarmament Conference: The Assembly recalled its decision at the special session on disarmament that at the earliest appropriate time, a world disarmament conference should be convened with universal participation and with adequate preparation. It renewed the mandate of its Ad Hoc Committee on this question, and noted that Committee's suggestion that after the 1982 special session on disarmament, the conference be held "as soon as the necessary consensus on its convening has been reached".

[Resolution 34/81, adopted without a vote.]

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Implementation of Decisions of the Special Session: In a series of resolutions concerning implementation of the recommendations and decisions of its 1978 special session devoted to disarmament, the Assembly:

- Called upon all States to "eliminate tensions and conflicts in their relations" and proceed towards collective measures under the UN Charter for a system of international order, security and peace, concurrently with efforts at disarmament measures.

[Resolution 34/83 A, adopted without a vote.]

- Declared that the Committee on Disarmament "should become urgently and most directly involved in substantive negotiations" on priority issues, and negotiations on specific disarmament issues conducted outside the CD "should not constitute an impediment" to the CD's negotiations on such questions. CD members involved in separate negotiations were invited to bring their negotiations to a positive conclusion, without further delay for submission to the CD "and, failing this, to submit to the Committee a full report on the status of their separate negotiations and results achieved so far in order to contribute most directly" to negotiations in the CD. The CD was requested to initiate negotiations in 1980 on the comprehensive programme of disarmament.

[Resolution 34/83 B, adopted by 130 to none, with 11 abstentions]

- Endorsed the recommendations of the Disarmament Commission on elements of the comprehensive programme of disarmament, which the CD will seek to elaborate in its negotiations on the subject.

[Resolution 34/83 H, adopted without a vote]

- Urgently called upon all States, in particular nuclear-weapon States and other major military Powers, to make every effort to successfully conclude current negotiations on effective international agreements according to the priorities of the Programme of Action of the special session, and to resume or undertake negotiations on a bilateral, regional, or multilateral basis on measures agreed by consensus at the special session.

[Resolution 34/83 C, adopted without a vote]

- Decided to continue the programme of UN fellowships on disarmament, initiated by the special session to promote expertise in disarmament, particularly in developing countries. (19 fellows from 19 countries took part in the 1979 fellowship programme.)

[Resolution 34/83 D, adopted without a vote]

- After considering a preliminary report of the expert group on the technical, legal and financial implications of establishing an international satellite monitoring agency, noted the "important contribution" which satellite technology can make in monitoring disarmament agreements, and requested an in-depth study to be submitted in time for the Assembly to take a decision at its 1982 special session on disarmament.

[Resolution 34/83 E, adopted by 124 to none, with 11 abstentions]

- Stated that "a new impetus should be given to endeavours to achieve agreements to freeze, reduce or otherwise restrain, in a balanced manner, military expenditures, including adequate measures of verification satisfactory to all parties concerned"; appealed to all States, particularly those most heavily armed, "to exercise self-restraint in their military expenditures" with a view to reallocating the funds thus saved to socio-economic development, particularly for the benefit of the developing countries, and requested the Disarmament Commission to identify ways of achieving agreements on restraining military expenditures.

/Resolution 34/83 F, adopted without a vote. In separate votes, a paragraph stating the need for "a satisfactory instrument for standardized reporting on the military expenditures of Member States" was approved by 127 to none, with 10 abstentions. The paragraph requesting action by the Disarmament Commission was approved by 127 to none, with 9 abstentions./

- Transmitted the views of States concerning the non-use of nuclear weapons, avoidance of nuclear war and related matters to the CD for appropriate consideration.

/Resolution 34/83 G, adopted by 112 to 16, with 14 abstentions./

- Requested the provision of resources and expertise for the successful completion of the expert study on the relationship between disarmament and development; re-emphasized that a principal aim of the study is to produce results that could guide the formulation of practical measures for reallocation of resources from military purposes to development; and appealed to Governments to make available data relevant to a meaningful completion of the study.

/Resolution 34/83 K, adopted without a vote./

- Requested the Secretary-General to provide the staff as well as necessary assistance and services needed by the CD and any subsidiary bodies it may establish.

/Resolution 34/83 L, adopted without a vote./

- Requested the Secretary-General to consult with the UN Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR) on the establishment of a United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research within the UNITAR framework, as an interim arrangement for the period until the 1982 special session on disarmament.

/Resolution 34/83 M, adopted without a vote./